



# Heavy Loads

Inside the Prison Industry Authority laundry  
at California State Prison-Solano

The Prison Industry Authority (PIA) Laundry at the California State Prison at Solano handles an average of 9.3 million pounds of laundry per year (that's approximately 30,000 pounds per day, six days a week). Although the size of the laundry in terms of space isn't huge by today's standards (it's 18,000 square feet), the

floor plan is configured to enable an efficient work area.

The laundry here processes linen and clothing not only for CSP-Solano, but also for the California Medical Facility (a separate prison), Sonoma State Hospital, Yountville Veterans Home and San Quentin State Prison. In addition, it provides

backup services for other PIA laundries.

Terry Moore, Prison Industry Authority manager, oversees the laundry at Solano, and takes pride in the employees and inmates who work there. One hundred and twenty-eight inmates work three shifts, six days a week. Staffing is provided





Inmates may study laundry processes, laundry machine maintenance or even accounting, all areas that are related to working in an institutional laundry setting.

by one Superintendent II, one Superintendent I, five industrial supervisors and one maintenance

and repair supervisor.

Laundry is all done for next-day service. It used to be daily,

but next-day service accommodates other facilities' time schedules and sallyport schedules better. Everything is done according to a set schedule for wash/dry and delivery. Once the truck load of laundry arrives from a customer, it is weighed, pre-sorted, tagged, and then staged in the washroom.

## NAILM

The National Association of Institutional Linen Management (NAILM) provides professional development and networking opportunities for its members, as well as the advancement of technologies that members utilize. It is not a union, and has no lobbying or collective bargaining functions. A non-profit organization, its elected and appointed officials serve without compensation.

NAILM's members come from correctional facilities, hotels, motels, resorts, spas, hospitals, long-term care facilities, cooperative laundries and independent or commercial laundries.

Networking opportunities, educational opportunities, correspondence courses, JCAHO (The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations) guidance (in areas of infection control, leadership and training) are all provided by NAILM to its members. The organization offers educational and informational conferences as well, as well as a laundry/linen/environmental services college designed to prepare potential and existing directors in all areas of industry, leadership and management skills.

## Safety First

Prior to an inmate beginning work, each goes through the safety training that includes a "code of safe practices," which is part of the prison's injury and illness prevention program. Components of the program include hazard evaluations, emergency procedures, safe work conditions, and right to know. A staff member conducts the training, which is documented and placed in the inmate work file. All equipment, of course, contains safety mechanisms designed to keep inmates from vandalizing it or interfering



# The PIA Laundry handles linen and clothing for five facilities—to the tune of 30,000 pounds of laundry a day.

with its operation.

"There is a lot of emphasis on safety here," says Moore. "In fact, our safety record has been exemplary."

## Equipment Roll Call

The PIA Laundry at Solano uses a host of heavy-duty equipment to wash and dry this continuous stream of dirty laundry. Day in and day out it operates: a 12-pocket continuous batch washer, one 480-pound washer extractor, one 700-pound washer extractor, five 400-pound dryers, one 200-pound steam dryer, one 125-pound washer extractor, two 110-pound dryers, two flatwork ironers/folders and two flathead presses. The continuous batch washer is the workhouse of the laundry operation, according to Moore.

Everything in the laundry is computerized, except for four dryers. The time savings offered by computerization are "incredible," says Moore. Financially, costs are held down because chemicals are measured precisely and operations are monitored three times a day, automatically. The computerized equipment doesn't require any additional maintenance time, either.

A well-designed preventive maintenance program ensures that all of the laundry equipment is checked thoroughly either every 30, 60 or 90 days, depending on the type of equipment and its needs.

Equipment was purchased from a variety of vendors over the years. All maintenance is done in-house, by inmates, supervised by the maintenance and repair supervisor. Many of these inmates will someday be

able to use their laundry equipment maintenance skills on the outside.

The equipment can last anywhere from 25 to 40 years,

depending on how well it's maintained, notes Moore. The newer

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models of equipment that are computerized have frequent upgrades, once or twice a year, and use fewer chemicals (by more precise measuring) and less water. The laundry uses an average of 35,000 to 40,000 gallons of water daily.

Dry cleaning is not handled here; rather it is done by the PIA's vocational education department.

### Hitting the Books

Approximately 60 percent of the inmates who work in the PIA laundry at Solano are enrolled in or have already obtained certification from the National Association of Institutional Linen Management (NAILM). Inmates may study laundry processes, laundry machine maintenance or even accounting, all areas that are related to working in an institutional laundry setting. Classes are taken by a correspondence course that includes components of laundry management,

accounting, textiles, equipment, chemistry, production, linen management and infection control, all areas that are related to working in an industrial/institutional laundry setting. Inmates are tested after each section is completed. At the conclusion of all components, a final exam of

350 questions (closed book) is administered by an authorized proctor. Inmates must have a minimum score of 70 percent to achieve a C.L.L.M. (Certified Laundry/Linen Manager) designation. CSP-Solano is certified to proctor NAILM exams on site.

### Happy Customers

Moore explains that the PIA's laundry quality control check is a rigorous one. Items are tested while in the washer, when they exit the wash machine, when they leave the dryer and when being folded and pressed. The tests involve visual and smelling inspections as well as Ph (alkaline/acidity) testing and titration testing.

"Every day is a good day because what we do here is good quality," explains Moore. "I can count on one hand the number of complaints I've had from our customers in 19 years."



Terry Moore, PIA manager, oversees the laundry at CSP-Solano.

For further information go to: [www.nlmnet.org](http://www.nlmnet.org)